

REMARKS

As a preliminary matter, claims 149-187 of the present invention have been cancelled without prejudice, and new claims 188-199 are submitted in place of the cancelled claims. Consideration, entry, and allowance of the new claims are respectfully requested.

The drawings stand rejected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). Although Applicants do not agree with the Examiner's objection, and submit that the drawings clearly reflect the plain claim language, Applicants submit that this objection is now moot in light of the newly cancelled and added claims.

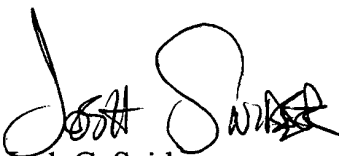
Claim 149 stands objected to for informalities. Claim 149 has been cancelled without prejudice, rendering this objection thereto now moot.

Claims 149-150, 152-156, 159-163, 165-172, and 175-179 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kurauchi et al. (U.S. 5,917,572) in view of Hirata et al., (U.S. 5,953,093). Applicants have cancelled these rejected claims, rendering this rejection now moot. Applicants further submit that this rejection is inapplicable to the newly added claims.

For all of the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that this Application, including claims 188-199, is in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney if an interview would expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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